

MARCH ISSUE 5

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Plus... BLAZAY BLAZAY!
FUNKMASTER FLEX!
LORD FINESSE! T-LIVE!
MIL GERONIMO! & THE
B-BY SUMMIT!!!!

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elements

We're tired as fuck and the mags late again. But "no big deal, no big deal!" Dedos did this cover. Kool Keith is from Jupiter, the UBC "substantial" breakfast tastes like a piece of shit and my ride drives like one. Thanks to Randy. San Diego was dope, over 30 hours on Greyhound sucked. Ask Prev. Beware of the De La Virus. Out.

Blahzay Blahzay	8
Mic Geronimo	9
Lord Finesse	10
B-Boy Summit	15
Busta Rhymes	18
J-Live	24
Masterpieces	4
Vinyl Konflikt	
• Funkmaster Flex	5
Word?	6
Metaphysics	14
re:Veivs	26
Mix Tape	30

Editors
J Swing
Mr. Flipout
Layout/Production
J Swing & Flipout
Art Direction
AllCity Action Team
Contributors
B-Mello
Checkmate
Rolando Espinoza
FreeStyle Craze
Jeeps
Kemo the Labrat
Kilo-Cee
Logic
Mr. Bill
Prevail Wonder
Sean Ski
Publisher
Linda Scholten

Elements Hip Hop Journal. **Elements** is a bi-monthly magazine published by the Student Radio Society of UBC.

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elementary

First of all, there's too much on my mind and insufficient r.e.m.s has forced me to say fuck it. I need sleep, let's just copy out some bugged lyrics from someone. So, without further adieu (or some shit like that) here's some un-elementary lyrics from our good friend Dr. Octagon from Jupiter:

(Paging Dr. Octagon...Code Blue in sector 19)

First patient, pull out the skull remove the cancer
Breakin' his back, chisel necks for the answer
Super sonic, bionic, robot voo doo power
Equator X, my chance to flex skills on Ampex
With power needles and heaters gauge anitfreeze
Octagon oxygen, illuminate intoxicants
More ways that blow blood cells in your face
React with four bombs and six fire missiles
Armed with seven rounds of space doo doo pistols
You may not believe livin' on the Earth planet
My skin is green and silver, baldhead lookin' mean
Astronauts get played, tough like a ukelele
As I move in rockets, overriding levels
Nothing's aware. Same data same system.

Controlled by gamma light!

Earth people, New York to California
Earth people, I was born on Jupiter...

Now my helmet's on, you can't tell me I'm not in space
With the national guard, United States Enterprise
Diplomat of swing with aliens at my feet
Comin' down a rampart through beam on the street
Obselete computes compounds and dead sounds
As I locate intricately independent, economic
Vomit I say, restore food
In castle D, my program is ability far reaction
And response to a no one
Identification code, unidentified
I got cosmophonic, press a button, change my face
You recognize. So what? I turn invisible
Make myself clear, reappear to you visual
Dissappear again, zap like an android
Face the fact I fly on planets everyday
My nuclear strength repaired, I return again
My 7XL is not yet invented

Earth people, New York to California
Earth people, I was born on Jupiter...

Space ranger, contact tubes send 'em Fed Ex
I program one and go to Earth through the fax machine
My number's 7097556EL3 computer file 9-3
Digital level, standing on the terminal
Upside down, through polygons fighting pentagons
Changing blue skin, my brown color's comin' back
I'm psychedellic this time, comin' rainbow!
Look at the green lights and y'all see my brain glow
Five colors: Yellow, black and red and green, purple...

Earth people...

- Kool Keith aka Dr. Octagon



"CAS"
CREW
VANCOUVER



"AKE"
FREIGHT
VANCOUVER



"SPYDR"
... HITS T.O.
TRANSIT!



"INSANE"
... FROM ACROW AND
STAGE IN VANCOUVER!



"SCAM"
TORONTO
FREIGHT

*
AEROSOL COLOURING
PAGE, DUE TO LACK OF
AD. FUNDS! SORRY
CRAYONS NOT INCLD.

Vinyl Konflikt

"funkmaster flex"

When did you first get started?

Um, like '83-'84. The first records I bought was like "Sucker MC's" and Davy DMX "One For The Treble". Some DJ's in the neighbourhood that were known like DST, Chuck Chillout, Red Alert, Jam Master Jay, they were always the people I always looked up to. I was always carrying records for Chuck Chillout in '87-'88, and I got a chance on the radio in '88 when he couldn't come in one night. Then when he got fired and went to WBLS he brought me to be his DJ. Then we both got fired from there and Red brought me to KISS FM to be his fill in DJ. Then HOT 97 heard me in the club and fillin' for Red and gave me a job.

So you been around as far as radio in New York.

Definitely. I've also done remixes for Montell Jordan, Duran Duran, Christopher Williams, Miss Jones - I've done a lot of stuff. Mostly I'm into productions now. I've got the Yvette Michelle single out.

So you don't really touch Hip Hop as much as R & B when it comes to production.

Yeah, I mean Akinlyle & Sadat X was a record I produced. I had a record "Six Million Ways To Die" with 9MM.

Speak about HOT 97 for a minute.

I'm on everyday of the week. I've been there for about 3 years. I try and play everything Reggae, old school, new school, classics, um... anything the people want to hear. I try and make it a party atmosphere. I like to do a lot of scratchin' and stuff too.

How do you approach playing a club as opposed to your radio show?

With the clubs I'm a lot more familiar than I am on radio. On the radio I like to play a lot more new music. I like to give people a balance of everything. I think that I've always been original in my flow of things. I've always wanted to give people variety and play for the people. I think that's what helped me a lot with my success.

Where did the title "New York's #1 DJ" come from?

People just kinda gave it to me.

I read in this magazine Thick that the X-Men were questioning that.

Yeah, I get a lot of that with DJ's and stuff but, and



I'm not afraid to say it, I feel that I am the #1 party rocker when it comes to rockin' a party. I feel that they're trick DJ's. They are the #1 trick DJ's. I think both are just as important in terms of music and DJ status. I'm not sure who's better in terms of... I would say them, because that DJ won the DMC.

Yeah, Roc Raider.

Yeah. So they're #1 at their craft and I would never take that away from them.

Let's speak about the "Mix Tape" for a second. Who's idea was it to take a mix tape and put it on wax and CD and distribute it through a major label. Your kinda stepping into uncharted territory.

That was me, but an album on a major normally presses vinyl, CD's and tapes and those things. I definitely wanted to have it on CD 'cause you know, a lot of people still use the cassettes in the deck but other than that a lot of people use CD's in their houses. DJ's like vinyl, and if they like a piece of the vinyl I want to get it out there for them. It came from different things. First it was just a compilation of new artists. Then it turned

into a new artists and a little bit of mixing. Then I said let's put freestyles, and then it was just like let's do a mix tape.

And you did it live?

Yeah, and it's one take.

What about the freestyles. Are they on dub plates?

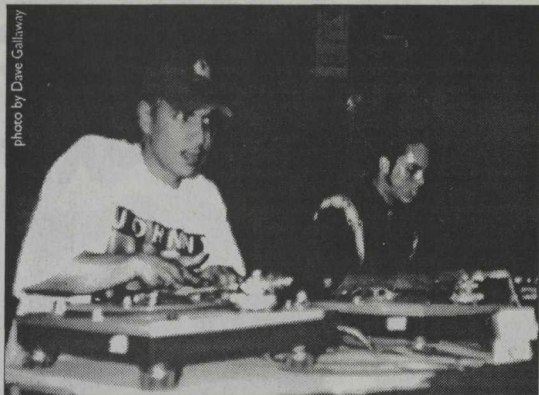
Yeah, so I would mix and then throw the dub plate in and then mix again, but you know, it was all one take.

Your doing this "Mix Tape" thing with Loud, but what other labels you on.

I'm on Loud/RCA, Nervous/Wreck, and I had a Flip Squad deal over at Relativity but now it's going to be on Geffen. A label deal through Geffen.

Before we end this, break down who's all in Flip Squad?

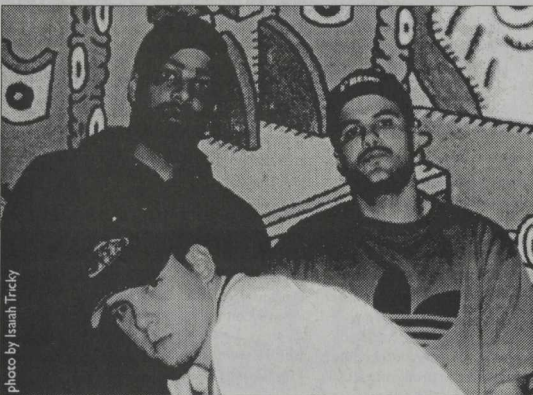
Flip Squad is Frankie Cutlass, Big Kap, DJ Enuff, Mr. Cee, DJ Doo Wop, DJ Riz and myself. We're really just a group of party DJ's.



Mix Master Mike & Zodak at "Drunken Monkey II"



Mad Child of Swollen Members at "Drunken Monkey II"



DJ Precise (of Elemental) & CIPHER

Word?

What's the **word?** Congratulations to **Ghetto Concept** for winning the Juno for the 2nd year in a row. Last year they won for their track "Certified" and this year they took top honors with "EZ On The Motion". The other four nominees were Vancouver's **Cipher** for "Peeps", Toronto's **Elemental** for their debut "Drama", **Saukrates** for "Still Caught Up" and **U.B.A.D.** for "The Legacy"... 102.7 CFRO's "Krispy Biscuit" mix show got themselves a new co-host by the name of **Sean Ski**, Ski, ski. He'll be doin' his thing along side **Incredible Ease** and **Kilo-Cee** every Tuesday night at midnight on the radio. Word to **Gerald**... **Swollen Members** members **Prevail** and **Madchild** have been working hard on their upcoming album over the past few months. Featuring guest spots from the likes of **Del the Funkie Homosapien** & **Tony Da Skitzo** and production credits going to **Del**, **Rhettmatic** (Beat Junkies), **Zodak** and DJ's **MixMaster Mike** and **Babu** on the cut. Word?... **R.T.A.** has released their debut 12" entitled "Indecision" b/w "Ya Need To Quit". For info contact First Imperial Recordings at (604) 875-9650... Saukrates' debut LP *FatherTime* will be released in April. The next single will be "Play That" featuring **Common**... **O.C.**, who also appears on Saukrates album has signed on to Pay Day Records since Wild Pitch folded... **KRS One** is the author of a new book that claims to teach rappers how to achieve commercial success entitled *The Science Of Rap*. The book only costs about \$10 dollars, go buy it... **Hey DJ's!!!** The vinyl copy of **Lord Finesse's** specially priced 9 song EP, *The Awakening* will feature an additional instrumental record of the whole album. Word?... **Slick Rick**, who managed to avoid being deported back to England late last year, has been denied parole but is currently working in a work release program preparing for his next album... **Snoop** and his bodyguard were acquitted of first and second degree murder on February 20th... **Peanut Butter Wolf**, who shined on The Bomb Compilation's *Return Of The DJ* record with "The Chronicals", will be releasing *Step On Our Egos*, his own compilation album featuring unsigned artists **Charizma** (R.I.P.), **Zest the Smoker**, **Encore**, **Fifty Grand**, **Subcontents** and **Clept the Contortionist**. The record will be released by South Paw Records and will be only available on vinyl. Word?... **Pharcyde's** newest promotional package is a 45 blue vinyl record for their single "Runnin'" featuring an unreleased b-side called "Emerald Butterfly"... **Jeru the Damaja** is currently in the studio with **Premier** working on his follow up to *The Sun Rises In The East*. Word?... **Heltah Skeltah** will be releasing their long anticipated full length LP *Nocturnal* in June. The other half of **Fab 5**, **Originoo Gunn Clappaz** will be dropping their album *The Storm* in July featuring a guest appearance from that wild cowboy **Sadat X**. In the mean time, Fab 5's record label, Priority, is releasing a remix for "Leflaur, Leflah" that will have "Letcha Brainz Blo" on the flip side... **Busta Rhymes** upcoming solo album *The Coming* features a **Leaders Of The New School** track to let the world know that

they never broke up, not for a second. Speaking of Busta, he's teamed up with the **Ol' Dirty Bastard** for a remix of "Woo Hah!" that may be hazardous to your health... **The Geto Boys** are getting back together to record a reunion album entitled *Ressurrection...* Other upcoming LP releases include **A Tribe Called Quest's** *Beats, Rhymes and Life* on Jive, **De La Soul's** *Stakes Is High* on Tommy Boy, **Large Professor's** *The LP* on Geffen, **Bahamadia** with *Kollage* on EMI, **Smooth Da Hustler's** *Once Upon A Time In America* on Profile, **Eric Sermon's** compilation *Insomnia* on Interscope, **Omniscence's** *The Raw Factor* on Eastwest and **Kwest Tha Madd Ladd's** *This Is My First Album* on American... Penalty Records newest artists **Capone & Noriega** have teamed up with **Mobb Deep** and **Havoc's** cousin **Tragedy** the Intelligent Hoodlum and released a response record to the **Dogg Pound's** "New York, New York" called "L.A., L.A." They recorded the record under the name **25 to Life** and rhymed over that same "New York, New York" beat. But just like the **Dogg Pounds** track about New York, **25 To Life** ain't really sayin' shit about L.A. Why?... **Big Noyd** got out from incarceration and is now in the studio with The Infamous **Mobb** working on his shit. His next joint will be the "Recognize & Realize" sequel featuring **Havoc** passing the mic this time around with **Noyd** and **Prodigy**... **Ras Kass'** next joint is going to be "Miami Life" and is taken from the soundtrack to the upcoming film *The Substitute*... **Fat Joe's** new 12" "Envy" features **Raekwon the Chef** and **Showbiz** trading verses with Mr. Joey Crack... Check for the new **RZA** remix of **AZ's** "Doe Or Die" on EMI that sounds like it's straight out the basement. Once again **Raekwon** makes a guest appearance. Shit's dope. Might as well check for **Genius'** latest 12" "Shadowboxing" b/w "4th Chamber" on Geffen and while you're at it ya might as peep out **Royal Flush** with "Movin' On Ya Weak Production" on Blunt, **Group Home's** "Suspended In Time" b/w "The Realness" on Pay Day and **Large Professor's** long awaited return "Mad Scientist" b/w "Spacy" on Geffen... **MC Search** is back independently with a new group called **Non Fiction** and a new twelve inch called "Legacy". The group consists of Search, **Ill** "Let me get the needle, pass it..." **Bill** and a couple of other MC's. Other independent records out include **Rhythm X's** aka Dr. Octagon's aka Big Willie Smith's aka **Kool Keith's** "Vanna Be a Star" b/w "Slide We Fly" on Funky Ass, **Rascalz'** "Dredded Fist" b/w "Clockwork" on Figure IV, **Saukrates'** "Father Time" b/w **Choclaire's** "21 Years" on Day Productions, **Marvel** from **Figures of Speech** has a song out on a white label (for now) called "Words Of" b/w **Saukrates'** "California" (over D'Angelo's "Lady" beat), **Organized Konfusion** produced **Mr. Complex** with "Feel Me I'm Rhymin' Against the Grain" on Core Records, **Frek Sho's** 4 song EP *Sho & Tell*, **Chill Rob G** with "Let Me Know Somethin'" on some label, **Company Flow** with their debut album *Fun Crusher* on some other label and **Jay-Z's** "Dead Presidents" on Roc-A-Fella Records. **Word.**

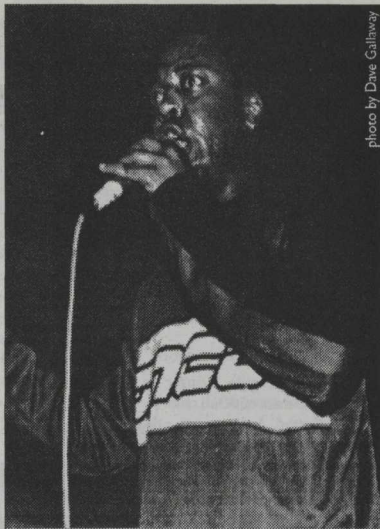


photo by Dave Galloway

Tony Da Skitzo at "Drunken Monkey II"



photo by Dave Galloway

Del at "Drunken Monkey"

Vancouver airwaves

CITR 101.9fm

"The Show" Sat. 6-8pm with Checkmate, Flipout & J Swing

"Awara House" Tue. 6-7pm with Shazia & Homa

"Hip Hop Habit" Every other Mon. 7-9pm with Otis

CFRO 102.7fm

"Krispy Biscuit" Tue. midnight with Ease, Sean Ski & Kilo-Cee

"No Mercy On The Groove" Mon. 4-5pm with Ebony & Kemo

"Beats 2 The Rhyme" Mon. 1-7am with Maximus Clean

CJSF 93.9fm

"Straight No Chaser" Fri. 8-10pm with Trevor Chan & Matt Chan

"We're on some strictly vibe shit. I don't like music that sound planned. Like you plan it to go commercial. I don't even listen to commercial rap really." There it is as defined by OutLoud: Vibe shit. Strict universal east coast flavored vibe shit is the best way to describe the music coming from the duo, Blahzay Blahzay. East New York has been the breeding ground for many a dope group to emerge from. From Jeru to Black Moon to Ol' Dirty and company to Diggety Das, Brooklyn always has and always will have a strong voice in Hip Hop's progression. Even though Hip Hop is now worldwide with distinct sounds coming from specific regions, the birthplace of this baby can never be fronted on.

Blahzay's debut single, "Danger" is a decidedly east coast anthem but OutLoud and P.F. Cuttin' are confi-

dent that audiences around the globe will appreciate and respect it as just a dope ass Hip Hop jam. Their music speaks multitudes, so as far as image or gimmicks is concerned they felt the best way to present themselves would be through their music, so whatever the name of the group is, is irrelevant or blahzay blah. The group functions as a self contained entity, handling all their own production and have contributed their skills on noteworthy projects such as Jeru's original demo package (unreleased material) as well as working with fellow Crooklynite Masta Ace among others. Blahzay are no new comers to this rap shit by any means. OutLoud has been molesting microphones for over ten years and P.F. Cuttin' has been DJin' since 1984 and his mix tapes circulate from coast to coast. He could also soon be the newest Rock Steady DJ out of New York to join the

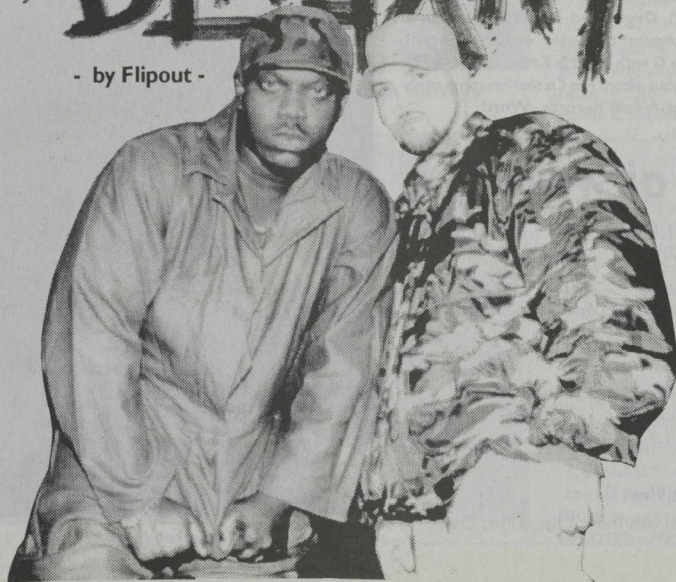
likes of Skribble and Tony Touch. OutLoud and P.F. have been friends for a long time, b boyin', writing graffiti, rhymin' and shit, before they decided to do music together circa 1986. Within those years they were steadily perfecting their craft while learning valuable information relating to the music business to better prepare themselves for the snakes of the industry but Outloud wearily states that, "to this day stuff still surprises me. You definitely have to have your business together, coming into the business."

Following the classic tradition of an MC on the mic and a DJ on the steel wheels, Blahzay promises to deliver an album with an "urban vibe" reflecting a combination of black and Latino backgrounds. P.F. Cuttin' being a Latino, shares his feelings on the role and contribution of Latinos in Hip Hop, specifically MCs. "To be perfectly honest man, I've never met a dope Hispanic rapper. It just so happens that the reason props is not given is cause nigguh ain't representing properly. I mean, Fat Joe is dope, ya know, he's Latino. I think it's just a matter of, 'Let's not focus on the faces and the colors and let's just hear what they got.' If it's dope, it's dope. There's just a handful of people representing, it's time to really show people what time it is."

As far as this exaggerated and exhausted east versus west bullshit, Blahzay regard it as being nothing more than a mere mirage and assure that it's not as deep as people are led to believe. Competition and battling is the nature of Hip Hop itself so the argument could be made that this east versus west fallacy is just a larger scale MC Shan versus Boogie Down Productions confrontation. But it's not the same, what's the difference? Outloud contributes his insight: "The difference was, that when we were doin' it back in the days, over the boroughs, it was more just vibe. It was just liveness, it was just Hip Hop. Now you can tell it's just poisoned by money. They're just doin' it for record sales." It is quite apparent to any logical Hip Hop head that this CREAM inspired motive could potentially damage Hip Hop's progression and taint its true essence, by distorting new listeners and the masses that this is what Hip Hop is all about in 96. What it really is is a self destructive, divide and conquer type of behavior that WILL potentially mortally wound Hip Hop. Sound like an over reaction? P.F. Cuttin' begs to differ, "It's very dangerous. Cause what's gonna end up happening is a lot of artists from L.A. ain't gonna be able to come out here. And a lot of us from out here ain't gonna be able to go out there. It's gonna be nothin' but beef." And when all those gimmicks play out, remember how Blahzay's gimmick was, as P.F. puts it, "just dope dope music man. You know, just keepin' it real from the street. The DJ and the MC." **Danger!**

BLAHZAY BLAHZAY

- by Flipout -



Mic GERONIMO

by Checkmate

Let's take it back to about three years ago... the place is Flushing, Queens; the man, an aspiring 19 year old MC named Mic Geronimo. "I used to rock at talent shows and shit, and then y'know, my man lrv had seen me one night and he said he had some studio time and did I wanna do a l'il demo." That was just the beginning for the now 22 year old MC also known as the Masta I.C. Geronimo got his name from one of his songs back in the day called "Microphone Geronimo" and the shit stuck. Signed to the young indie label Blunt Recordings, Mic has recently released his debut album entitled "The Natural". Ironically, when he first shopped his demo record companies weren't interested so, like other hungry artists before him, he pressed up his own 12 inch. The idea was to create a buzz in the industry so record labels would take notice and the plan evidently worked. "Shit's Real" set it off for Geronimo. Not only did the single hook him up with a deal but it also became an underground classic. When asked where the funding came from for that first record all Mic had to say was "We just came up with the loot." Payin' dues... word up.

So you basically put your self on, doin' your own thing.

Mic Geronimo: Straight up! I ain't really tryin' to focus on nothing except on doin' it the way I been doin' it... the way I know how.

That's what's fly about this cat - no braggin' or complacency in the rhymes and no dissin' and preachin'. It's just some shit my man put down for himself and his niggaz. "The Natural" is a fitting title for Geronimo's debut in that he busts about what comes naturally to him.

So you just bustin' about your surroundings and environment.

Right. Y'know, shit I've been through and shit my people is goin' through... just the normal.

Geronimo runs with his clique known as the Wasteland Family, who are featured on the album on "Men Vs. Many". O.C., Royal Flush, and this other nigga C-Lo all rhymed on that song which is possibly the albums tightest track. It will be featured on the b-side of Geronimo's upcoming single "Wherever You Are".

What's up with your boys?

Wasteland Fam. Well Royal Flush is out on Blunt. O.C. got a deal with Pay Day, he's chillin'. And C-Lo, we workin' with him now. He's gonna do his thing.

So shit's goin' good for you now, on the business tip?

Well y'know, I can't complain. It's taken it's course so I'm just working diligently.

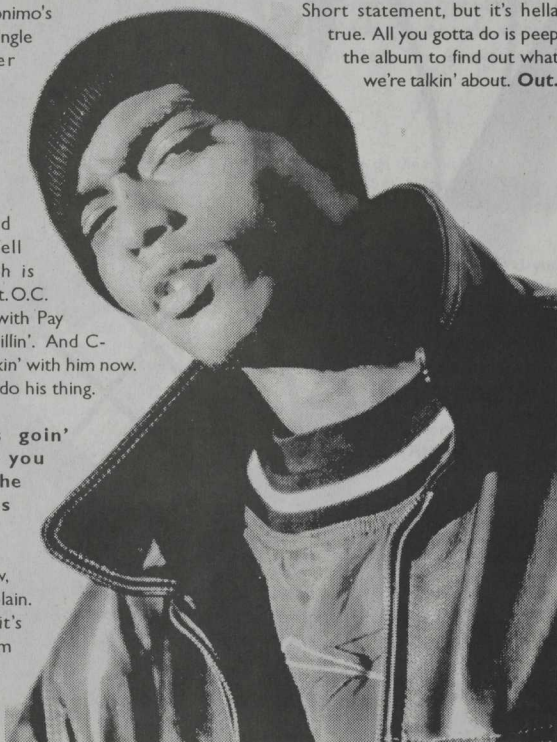
You gettin' paid or you gettin' pimped?

Naw, I ain't never been pimped!

No Question! But you know that shit does happen.

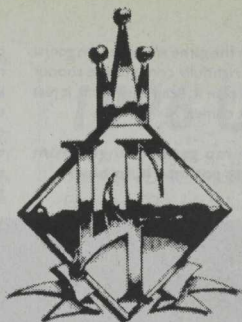
You gotta watch out. You in that type of world so you gotta play the game accordingly.

When I asked Geronimo how he classified his shit, he said "It's just me." Short statement, but it's hella true. All you gotta do is peep the album to find out what we're talkin' about. **Out.**





LORD



FINESSE

Growing up in the "Boogie Down" South Bronx listening to the likes of Grand Master Flash, The Treacherous Three and The Cold Crush Brothers, Lord Finesse was fortunate to bear witness and experience Hip Hop in its earlier stages, back when it wasn't done for the cash and it was all about fun and rockin' the house. Ever since he first grabbed a mic, Finesse's freestyle rhyming and now signature punchline delivery has helped build himself a rep for rockin' house parties, rippin' outdoor jams and dominating MC battles. A record deal was inevitable in 1989 when Wild Pitch signed him up to record his first album *Funky Technician* which spawned the classics "Strictly For The Ladies" and the "Yes You May" remix. But as all classic Hip Hop albums from that time (or anytime for that matter), its sales weren't there and he and Wild Pitch went their separate ways. In 1992 he released his sophomore effort on Giant, *Return Of The Funky Man* which continued on from where the last album left off but again Finesse fell victim to a record label that was not willing to put time and money into promoting their artist properly. These two incidents with record labels led Finesse to step away from the mic for a minute and turn his focus to production. Now in 1996 Finesse is back on the mic AND behind the boards after signing with Penalty Records and has just released his third and best effort entitled, *The Awakening*.

- interview by J Swing -

What have you been up to since your last LP?

Well, a lot of production. Since the last LP I've definitely been doin' mad production from you name it, I done it. After doin' production I felt that a lot of things I was doin' for other artists wasn't shinin' how I wanted it to shine, or if I was performing on it, it would have gone a little further. That made me want to get to my own album.

What made you decide to make the transition from MC to producer?

Well it's like, not to take anything away from the producers I work with cause they hit me with stuff, but they don't know what I feel inside. Only I know what I feel inside and what I want to rhyme to and that's the difference between this project from the last project. I'm finally experienced enough to hook up the tracks myself and be up in the studio with just me and the engineer and make it happen.

How do you feel about your last LP?

Not to good. It coulda went way further

than what it went, but it's cool.

What do you think the reason for that was?

Me. I was probably confused and didn't know which route I wanted to take. There was a lot of things that were bothering me on the last album. The label couldn't feel what Finesse was about and take him to the next level. They was really lost with my project. I feel now that I'm back with an independent small label they can feel where I want to go and hopefully they have enough money to take it there this time around.

What happened with Bandoola Records and that track "Check The Method"?

Bandoola, that's like... let me see what terminology I can use. It was like I was an informed passenger on the titanic and I just got off before it sunk. When they started sinkin' I was already in my life raft goin' somewhere else, y'know. And "Check The Method", that's not on nothin'. The more I was doin', the better I was becoming so it's like I don't know - maybe "Check The

Method" will be on the next album or a b-side or somethin'. It's not over with cause I still got it, I just don't know what I'm gonna do with it.

So you're with Penalty now. Did you want to go with a smaller label or were you lookin' to get picked up by a major?

Yeah, I was lookin' for a smaller independent because I wanted more control. Finesse needs control in order to make it happen cause it's like a lot of majors got the money but don't got a clue. And since they don't have a clue the artists suffer. So I'd rather go with a label that has a clue and knows what Finesse is about and try to expand off that than try and do it the other way around.

Is that why you called the new E.P. "The Awakening", because of what you went through in the past with Wild Pitch, Giant and Bandoola?

Yeah, it's like I woke up. I woke up years later after a couple of experiences and I'm just ready to make it happen in 9-6. This is it. This is pull all your stops here, cut all

your wires here, this is where it comes down to on this new album. This is just the beginning. Like I said "The Awakening", it's just me waking up to a new day. It's like a resurrection but I didn't want to call it resurrection. I wanted to call it an awakening because now I'm seeing a lot of different things than before. Even when I perform at shows nowadays I go back. See, when I performed before I never did none of the old stuff, whatever I had out then and there that's what I performed. Now I go all the way back to "Strictly For The Ladies" or "Yes You May" remix. I go back. That heads be like 'Oh shit! That was him.'

That's what you gotta do 'cause those are classic joints right there.

Exactly. See I never felt that those were classics due to the fact that I didn't get the commercial success that I wanted to get. That made me go 'Damn man, I don't want to perform that. I'm only going to perform my updated shit cause my updated shit is better.' But that's not so. Once I started performin' the old joints it's like the whole club would be singin' it with me - that's like an awakening. It's like 'Oh shit, I didn't know that shit was hot. I think I better start doin' it, y'know.'

You weren't feeling those songs at all?

I don't know, I never got to the place I want to get in Hip Hop. I mean I got props, but I never got the props I wanted to get. Then I woke up and realized I don't have to have no commercial success to be that player in the game, to be that official type niggah in the game. All I gotta do is be myself, do what makes Finesse best.

What does this E.P. have to accomplish to reach the success you have in mind for it?

It don't even have to go gold, all it got to do is reach that level of respect where people know who Finesse is and what Finesse is about. That's all. I been in the game 8 years and I just want to be in the game for a good 10, 12 maybe 15 years. If I'm in the game then I got ways of makin' money. You stop makin' money once you're out the game. So

as long as I'm in the game whatever I'm gonna get is going to rightfully come to me sooner or later. I can't plan it, I can't ask for it, it just comes when it comes.

How has the rap game changed from when you first got into it, to now?



"I woke up and realized I don't have to have no commercial success to be that player in the game, to be that official type niggah in the game."

Well it's like, now it's more business. I mean it was business before, but now it's more business than talent. Videos over shine talent. Instead of people being who they really are you can become some type of cartoon character or a mob figure and front it out on records and sell records. Whereas before it was just fun, it was entertainment. Now they took it to a movie level, cause everything you see and hear ain't always real. But a lot of consumers don't really see that. They think that shit be really happening until they see their rap artist get into some type of incident then they know all that stuff they say

on rap records wasn't actually real, it was made up. I'm sayin', how many artists you know cop pleas at the end of the day after they sell their records. All rappers want to do is get to a certain level and then that's that. All of a sudden they're not that portrayed characters on their records. 'Now, that was just for the sales. Now I got the gold sales I want to be peaceful, I want to find god now.' But their leading their fans somewhere else.

Speak about the album for a minute, you got mad heads on it.

Yeah, see people get it mixed up. They say 'Well, Finesse he needs help, that's why he calls on all these guests' but it ain't nothin' like that. These are people that I admire, and they admire me and I wanted them to be a part of the project. It's like a Quincy Jones thing. He gathers up all the artists he admires but it's still his shit. On this album you got Doo Wop, Akinyele, MC Lyte, O.C., and Showbiz - they all are on interludes. Actual songs you got "Brainstorm" with me, KRS One and O.C. You got "Actual Facts" with me, Grand Puba, Sadat and Large Professor. That shit's off the hook. Then you got me, AG, Diamond and Marquee on "Speak Ya Peace". Those are your main symphony joints. I mean I'll be explaining this album for hours, you just gotta really go get it. It's an E.P. and it'll be specially marked price. You got 9 cuts for an E.P. right.

That's basically Nas' album.

Right, that's an album. That's Nas' album. So you got 9 cuts and 7 interludes but you gettin' it at a specially marked price

number one. Number two, you gettin' an instrumental album for those vinyl heads out there.

For real? Just instrumental, no chorus' or nothin'?

Nope. Plain, pure music. It's an E.P., but then you also get an instrumental E.P., interludes and all. So real Hip Hop DJ heads is goin' to be satisfied. Even heads that don't know Finesse but may like the music - what's goin' to stop them from buying it. 'I think I'ma get that shit' or 'I wanna rhyme to his

instrumentals'. I'm just tryin' to do it in 9-6.

How do you get down at live shows?

I go all vinyl now, I'm tryin' to leave DAT alone. The only time I do DAT is when I don't have a chance to get vinyl or the songs brand new. I don't really go DAT no more. Half the times my peeps are in the crowd chillin', or they comin' down supportin' Finesse like O.C., Diamond, y'know, Diggin' In The Crates. So they get pulled up on stage and you get somethin' the you don't expect.

Who's DJ'ing for you now and what happened to Mike Smooth?

Timberland, he from the Bronx. We grew up together for years. Mike Smooth is still down, we kick it. He's producing now. But Timberland is one building from where I used to live at, and right across from Mike, so he's been there. He's what Mister Cee and Jam Master Jay is to Kane and Run D.M.C., y'know. He don't really have to get all tricky but money is accurate.

What's up with D.I.T.C.?

Well currently Buckwild is working with O.C. on his new album. Show & AG's working on they shit. Diamond is in the studio workin' on his shit. Big L is working on his shit, Fat Joe is currently out in stores now, so if you ain't pick it up, then pick it up. And now I'm gettin' ready to drop, so what we tryin' to do is to keep evolv'in' in a full circle.

Is there still talk of a Diggin' In 'The Crates' album?

Yeah, it's still in the works. It's goin' to be wild. Production wise? Come on - me, Diamond, Buckwild and Show. It's goin to be wild. There will be some MC's you haven't heard from before though, but as far as producers it's D.I.T.C.

Is there anything you wanna touch on?

Naw, I addressed what I wanted to address. Any future things, that will come in the future. We'll speak again then.

Artist: Lord Finesse
Label: Penalty
Album: The Awakening
Prod: Finesse, Mike Lo
Crew: Diggin' In The Crates
Home: South Bronx, NY

1996 USA DMC Finals

The USA DMC mixing championship battle was held on March 3rd in San Francisco. The six U.S. finalists were: **Melo-D**, **Babu**, **Swamp**, **Mista Sinister**, **Roli Roh**, and **King IXL**. Each DJ got six minutes to show off their skills and starting it all off was Swamp from Cleveland. My girl told me she thought he was the soundman for the show, because he was this white guy with long hair comin' out of his ski cap (a typical look of an alternative soundman in Seattle). Anyway, he set it off with a well planned routine, starting off with a little story intro incorporating "Cleveland, Ohio" & "San Francisco" then droppin' "Dopeman" and making it say "In the Bay" & "kick in the Bay" while manipulating the beat as well. He continued to get the crowd open with an impressive display of beat juggling, pitch manipulation, scratches, and ending his routine, smashing records against the wall. Very dramatic. Although there were five other talented DJ's, none could match the intensity of Swamp's performance. (You'll have to peep the video to check how it went down). After it was officially over Babu, (who won the West Coast DMC's) captured 3rd place while 2nd place went to Mista Sinista (who won the East Coast DMC's) and Swamp (who was the East Coast DMC's 2nd place winner) took top honors winning a pair of 1200's, a DMC USA Championship jacket and a plane ticket to Italy to compete in the DMC World Championship title. The crowd was also treated to an exhibition of skills from some other reputable DJ's like **Rob Swift**, **Roc Raider**, **Q-bert**, **ShortKut**, **8-Ball**, **Disk**, **MixMaster Mike**, and **Alladin** just to name few. There was also a live performances from Priority recording artist **Consious Daughters** and **Junior P**. Big shouts out to **Beni B**, **Sadiki** and the whole **Bay Area Hip Hop Coalition** for putting on the first USA finals on the west coast. Also congratulations to **Sadiki** and **Tamu** on the birth of their baby boy!! Oh, I can't forget to mention the DJ's that kept it going before and in between including **Joe Quixx**, **Rob One**, and mad B.A.H.H.C. DJ's. Overall, be sure to peep the video like I said before.

by DJ B-Mello

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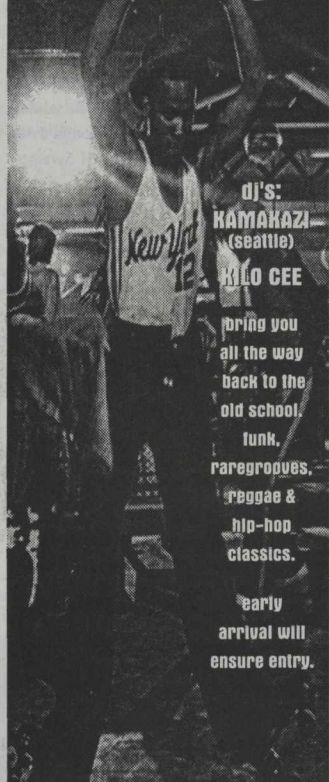
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once again we're going...

WAYBACK



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KILO CEE

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back to the
old school
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raregrooves,
reggae &
hip-hop
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early
arrival will
ensure entry.

EL FAMOSO
(at the red lounge)

wed march 27 - 816 richards

check **DIGGIN IN THE CRATES** wed. march 20
with **KILO-CEE & SEAN-SHI**



Metaphysics by Mr. Bill

You know I gave up a lot of shit. I gave up the radio show ("Krispy Biscuit"). I gave up going out to clubs. I gave up trying to identify or highlight who or who isn't a card carrying Hip Hop member. I basically gave up **wasting my life** for getting nothing back. You know what? I also gave up telling anyone that I'm involved in the community! Why? Because I knew I would pay for it one way or another. I had enough.

I was tired and I couldn't focus or think straight. It got too big this thing called Hip Hop. Look around, it's now a watered down commodity with a money making system to bring it to the mainstream. **Yes** it has gone mainstream. Our multimedia world has a new multi billionaire bitch called Hip Hop to pimp. "Keep it real" is the rally cry of every artist getting paid - you're so hard, you're so street, you're so... marketable.

Yo Bill, relax! Why did I get started? Why did I get into this? How did I lose sight and perspective? I guess I lost it when everyone jumped on the dick.

But now nobody knows what I do or where I'm at - I like that. I like that I can now go back to the spiritual world and feel the cultures power once again. I had stopped feeling it. The music was so watered down with half assed artistic effort that I nearly got sick thinking about what my love had become.

Then I remembered I came into the artform confused, hungry, angry, disassociated and I found a connection with spirits from the same world - then it changed and became some cool party bullshit. But that has all ended. Now I pick my spots and have regained my appetite for the artform which I could barely contain on the best of days.

The hunger has returned for expression of written voice and musical arrangement in the inner world of my mind - a place where dimensional doors open to somewhere finer. Not only a place where the truth, good or bad, can co-exist in balance, but also a place where pain, hunger, anger, frustration and alienation are transformed to insight, love, truth and wisdom.

People kick all this knowledgable shit - that's not wisdom. Hip Hop has a few core people who have original keys to original doors. Everybody else just has copies of those keys. I've been blessed to see the kingdoms and places of other dimensions that these core people have opened. Those key holders talked directly to my mind, body and soul. The rest talked shit and gave me lies and empty promises.

I wait patiently for new key holders blessed with creativity, energy and originality to destroy the whole system and open new doors. There is a whole culture of so-called artists "slaying wack emcee's", but who's building new kingdoms and who's holding the keys?

Summit

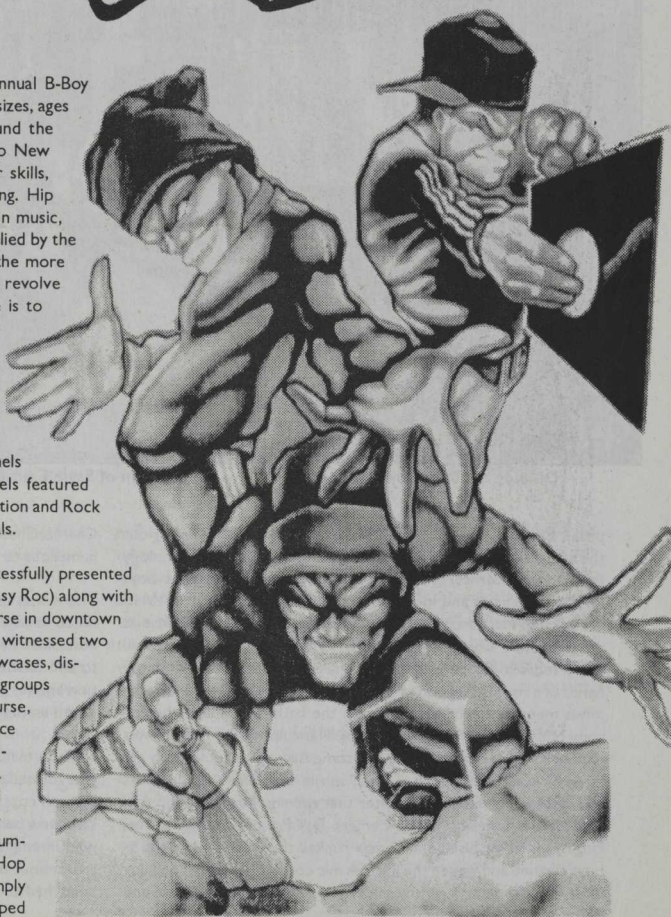
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For B-Boys and B-Girls around the globe, the annual B-Boy summit is a gala event. B-boys of all shapes, sizes, ages and ethnic backgrounds came from all around the world, from Japan to Germany to Chicago to New York to Vancouver, ready to contribute their skills, energy and enthusiasm to this positive gathering. Hip Hop has definitely grown into a culture rich in music, dance, art and education. Its power being supplied by the youth while being guided into the future by the more experienced elders, whose basic teachings revolve around the philosophy, "to know your future is to know your past." The music business has exploited and manipulated MC's to be seen as the important aspect in Hip Hop but as seen at this summit ALL aspects play equal parts in the whole of the culture. This and many other topics relevant to the future of Hip Hop and the world in general were discussed at panels held throughout the celebration. These panels featured members of the San Diego Chapter of Zulu Nation and Rock Steady crew amongst other insightful individuals.

The third annual B-Boy summit was very successfully presented this year by Eternal Two Creations (Asia and Easy Roc) along with J-Love and was held at the San Diego Concourse in downtown San Diego, California. February 23rd and 24th, witnessed two days of Hip Hop madness including graffiti showcases, discussion panels, live performances from new groups and from some living legends too and of course, plenty of b-boyin'. Admission to this conference was absolutely nada as everybody involved volunteered their time and skills on the love love. No video camera recorders were permitted except for a designated few who were accumulating footage for the always heavily anticipated summit video, which is sold to the hungry Hip Hop heads who couldn't attend or to those who simply want to see it again and again. The money reaped



for the video sales is one of the few resources the summit organizers have, therefore justifying their concern of other cameras filming.

Friday night started the celebrations that were to unfold with "The Graf Show", an exhibition, discussion and live demo of Aerosol Art. While the doors were waiting to be opened, Europe's Mode 2 and LA's Dove and Fear painted their names on plywood sheets outside. On display inside were some canvasses featuring work from writers such as ZodaK (San Diego), Sug One (Albuquerque), Pres One (San Diego) and others. When the doors opened, some b-boys hit the floor as the DJ threw on some records and people started vibing, waiting for the panel to start. The panel consisted of: Mode 2, Cre-B (LA), ZodaK, Chaka (notorious LA tagger), Crayone (Bay Area), Easy Roc (San Diego) and Mear (LA). The round table discussion was an insightful agenda that raised many questions and aspirations about the future of graffiti and of Hip Hop with an em-

ear, making the night complete.

Saturday brought a set of events that would prove difficult to duplicate or perhaps accurately re-word. At highnoon outside the Concourse, hundreds of break boys and girls stood just outside the doors of the foyer waiting to enter the building. Music could be heard from inside as patrons were frisked for markers, due to the actions of "SHIT One" the previous day. Inside, the first room contained a stage where the DJ's monitored the crowd and was lined with tables of paraphernalia and merchandise. In the centre of the room dawned a b-boys fantasy: a 40 square foot hardwood floor. B-boys caught wreck non-stop even when the panels were announced to commence in the next room. That afternoon's agenda once again addressed the future and the roles of Hip Hop icons. The panel consisted of: Crazy Leggs, MixMaster Mike, Mode 2, Prince Kenny Swift, Prince Whipper Whip, Storm (from Tempe, Arizona), Asia One, Easy Roc, The Archbishop of Hip Hop, Kutfather,



Outside at the B-boy cipher

Ariston of Style Elements

Tony Touch

phasis on politics and media and the ongoing question of selling out the artform. Interesting discussion was made of graffiti technology (graf on the internet) as well. As the panel came to a close, b-boys hit the floor again and more vibin' and mingling took place. Writers Per and Mack from FX Crew (New York) were in the house as were a whole slew of reputable writers. Shortly after the panel dispersed, a member of ignorance's crew struck. A marker in the hands of a toy put a mood of disappointment in the air as an anonymous member of the group tagged the bathroom, maybe hoping somebody would give his shit props. The culprit, "SHIT One" was exposed and was handed a rag and some Ajax so he could really get busy. Overall, it all ended in good spirits with plenty of numbers and ideas being exchanged. Later that evening, heads headed to a spot by the name of Rockers where DJ's Prymetyme, KCA one, Fingaz, Kutfather, Just-I, and Lomax rocked the wheels while the b-boys cleaned and waxed the floor. A mic controller named Medafor did a little something on the mic that opened up many an eye and

Charlie Chase, Donald D, Tonai (El Puente) and other people too numerous to name on top of everything else.

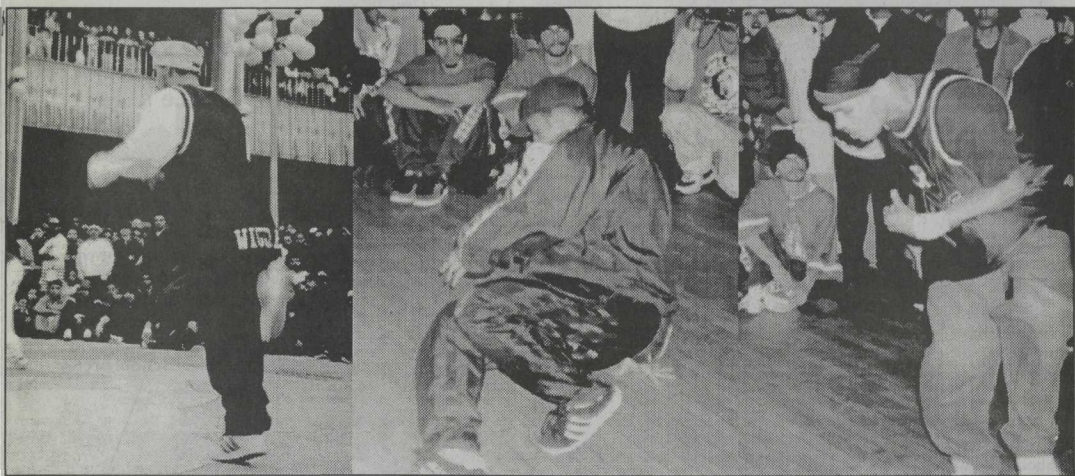
The words spoken and emotions relayed were well received by all those in attendance, as even the most knowledgeable Hip Hop advocate came out of the discussion having found something new to add to their third eye library. The panel concluded with question/answer period and then focus turned to the courtyard outside for an unforgettable showing.

Under a mild clear sky at around 5:00pm, hundreds of b-boys and girls formed a cipher approximately 80 feet in diameter around a smooth concrete mosaic. Spectators scrambled for the best possible view behind the first two rows, which were packed with those who intended on entering the vast cipher. The circles perimeter grew about ten rows deep, anybody planning on a view after that point had to measure over seven feet tall to see anything. Still

more enthusiastic heads lined the balcony overlooking the circle for a bird's eye view of the unforeseen events to unravel. For the next two and a half hours, Cut Chemist from the Jurassic 5 and Tony Touch (New York RSC) supplied the breaks, as Kutfather rocked the mic and helped pump the already dangerously high adrenaline level of the crowd. At first, heads seemed hesitant to represent as only a few brave souls ventured in but as soon as the theme from Wild Style dropped, motherfuckers were going in four at a time and battling for the spotlight. Things got a little more organized and it got down to one at a time in the circle, everybody respecting each other's opportunity to contribute to the vibe. As the cipher went on, the circle shrunk about 30 feet and the music had to be halted in order to regain order and re-form the circle to its original size. At first everybody co-operated, but after a couple of stoppages, the MC's realized that nobody wanted to give up their spot and the circle stayed small. It proved to be a turn for the better because it seemed that the true bad boys perform best when the

bers & Zodak, Tony Da Skitzo & JFX, Jurassic 5 & Cut Chemist, Rhettmatic & Key Kool and the Invisible Skratch Picklez. Jurassic 5 brought down the house with their traditional (old) school routines and superior crowd and breath control. Invisible Skratch Picklez's Q-bert and Shortkut had the crowd in need of straight jackets as they displayed in-cre-di-ble turntable techniques, flipping everything from Run DMC to De La Soul. But the icing on the cake happened when Whipper Whip, Donald D (yes from Rhyme Syndicate) and Kurtis Blow grabbed the mics with Cut Chemist on the one's and two's. The roof caught fire, the house came down, the walls caved in and everyone waved their hands like they just didn't care. In case it need be stated, b-boys and girls formed three different ciphers and went off from 9:30pm right up until 2:00am featuring too many highlights to even bother describe. In short, catch the video.

To summarize the weekends happenings, the most appropriate state-



Mr. Wiggles of RSC

Prince Kenny Swift of RSC

Flomaster of RSC

cipher is tight like at a jam and that summoned some sick individuals out from the woodworks. Some highlights were when Rock Steady Crew's Flomaster, exchanged moves in a battle with Ariston from Stockton, California's Style Elements crew in a display of free-style finesse and spontaneous move for move combat. Japan RSC represented well with some tight-ass routines as did Ken Swift and Flomaster, combining for an incredibly dope doubles routine. Asia, Honey Rockwell, a girl from Jersey and a girl from Tokyo repped for all the fly b-girls in the house as well as showing some boys a thing or two. Crews in the house included Point Blank, Psychotic Funk (San Diego), Air Force (LA), BOSS (Seattle), DVS (Seattle) and too many other anonymous individuals and squads to remember.

The summit came to a close that evening with an afterparty, hosted by Prince Whipper Whip and featuring a list of performances that went as follows: Beat Junkies, Ricashay & Syko, Yutaka, Z- Trip, Dream Nefra, E.C. & DJ Static, LPSP & Steven Flex, Swollen Mem-

ment would be a direct excerpt from the handbill: "The summit takes Hip-Hop to a multitude of levels: a forum for Hip Hop role models to discuss their crafts; how to heal our community; ways to uplift the movement and regain control of the industry; to display skills of dance, graf, rap, mixing; to network and celebrate our culture. Most importantly, the purpose of the B-boy Summit is to educate and entertain in a safe environment, not motivated by economic gain, but by the proliferation of our culture and community."

For info on video tapes of the Summit contact:

Eternal Two Creations
364 20th Street
San Diego, CA
92102
(619) 418-1448

BUSTA RHYMES

“Busta Rhymes the mighty infamous! Always misbehavin’ and mischievous!” by Freestyle Crazee

When I first saw the “Case of the P.T.A.” video on Pump It Up! I fuckin’ tripped! Three MCs I never heard of in my life come out of nowhere and appear on my T.V. At first I thought it was just me but when my homeboys were trippin’ on it the next day, I knew it was the bomb. We were bustin’ that east coast stomp everywhere! I’m talking way before Kris Kross was put together. That video and song are classic material no if’s and’s but’s or maybe’s. So I went out and bought that 12 inch and about a month later I got the tape. Listen, I was what? 16 years old and in grade 10 and shit and here’s this album with like 20 songs on it all about shit that happens at school! What songs were there...like “Too Much on My Mind” and “Planes, Trains and Automobiles” and my personal favorite to this day, “Show Me A Hero.” Incidentally, the first solo performance Busta ever did. I should be naming every song off the album cause that shit made me love Hip Hop even more than ever. Then after they released about three or four twelve inches off that shit, the Leaders of the New School disappeared for like, four years. They did make one noteworthy appearance in 1991 when LONS teamed up with Tribe to record the classic “Scenario” off of Tribe’s Low End Theory album. That shit blew my mind too and it was the first shit that Leader’s rhymed on that didn’t have to do with

school and it was dope. But anyway, they disappeared for a couple years after that until 1993 when they released their second full length record, T.I.M.E. or The Inner Mind’s Eye. At the time it came out, personally, I loved the shit cause it reminded me of the old Leaders, you know the hypeness and energy and everything but a lot of people couldn’t get into it. I did get the privelidge of witnessing a live performance in late ‘93 and if you’ve ever seen Leaders live before then you know the shit is off the hook! All I can say is, is that these dudes can’t be touched live by many other groups in this Hip Hop shit. The shit I remember best was them bustin’ their “Scenario” verses over Busta’s beatbox and the whole crowd doin’ backup vocals. Oh yeah, I also remember when they freestyled with Del on Pump It Up! and Busta was bustin’ a beatbox with some pool balls... Anyway, Leaders are back in 1996 in the form of Busta Rhymes solo. After doin’ a shitload of cameos in the last three years (check out the list) Busta’s back with the Flip Mode Squad and a new album called *The Coming*, making sure everything remains raw. I got a chance to talk to Busta on his cellular while he was chillin’ in LA doin’ some promo shows. Now before you read the following interview you gotta know a few things. First of all, Busta don’t talk all crazee like he rhymes.

He sounds like he did on “S.O.B.B. Story”, that’s the best way to describe his conversation voice. He does have a strong descriptive characteristic that makes everything he say sound very convincing and demands attention. So try to visualize the man’s voice and peep the conversation:

Did Leaders of the New School break up?

Nope.

No?

Nope. Never broke up. Kill all of the speculation, misinterpretation, false information. We never broke up. Sometimes we need to separate, go through the love and hell for shit to come out right. Motherfuckers is just capitalizing as individuals just to make a stronger unit. But then we get back together, so you know.

So do Dinco, Charlie Brown and Milo in De Dance appear on your new shit?

We got the new Leaders of the New School song on my album, it’s called “Keep it Movin’.” Knowhati’m sayin’, ‘cause we done let a lot of time pass by. Right now, we gonna come back and kill shit and keep it movin’. Right now the focus is on Busta



"Never broke up. Kill all of the speculation, misinterpretation, false information. We never broke up. Sometimes we need to seperate, go through the love and hell for shit to come out right."



Rhymes... later on we'll discuss the Leaders of the New School plans and things of that nature. But you know, just to keep motherfuckers posted I had to drop that Leaders joint my album just lettin' nigguh know that we gonna still bring the ruckus. In due time though, knowhat' msayin'?

Yeah, word. So whatever happened to Rumpelstiltskin?

I have no idea. I have no idea.

Alright. And what about the New School Society?

I have no idea. I'm representing Flip Mode Squad and Leaders of the New School and my motherfuckin' self du'. I ain't representing nuttin' else right now. And my family homeboy.

So who's all in Flip Mode then?

Flip Mode is the squad. I got my nigguh Rampage the Last Boy Scout, lyrical lieutenant of the unit, holdin' it down, front line type of nigguh. Lord Have Mercy, that motherfucker right there got the voice of the ten commandments b. Lyrical genius. And I got a four piece harmony, exotic blend female vocalist group called, True To Life. And I also got a soloist, ghetto Mariah Carey du'. Her name is Mika, she's illmatic.

(Laughter) When will I hear them?

Hold on one second...

(Busta talks away from the phone but still audible. This is what I can hear in the background):

That's Kool Keith from Ultramagnetic nigguh! What the fuck is the deal nigguh!!! That was the shit though, "MC Ultraaaa, MC Ultraaaa!"

(Now I can hear Busta talking to Kool Keith in the distance then... the phone disconnects. I wait for about five minutes then he phones back.)

Yo, what the fuck's goin' on? Is Kool Keith there with you?

Yeah, he just walked up on us. I was like, "Oh shit!" cause we ain't seen that nigguh in about four years.

That's Dr. Octagon!

No question kid! That's the scientist right there duke. Word up.

He was there right now?

"what I realized about a lot of us people - that aren't European - and aren't naturally a descendant of the western civilization, we usually do shit that conflicts with the society structure. That makes us look like the outcasts, that makes us feel like we the strange ones."

He just walked to us, where we was parked cause we parked in front of this restaurant, Rosco - that's the hottest waffle and chicken spot in the whole country. Word up.

(Laughter)

(Laughing) My man Kool Keith walked up on me, I nearly fell off my motherfuckin' chair duke! That's my nigguh! I love that motherfucker duke, his shit is crazy. He don't give a fuck! He just be rhythmin' about the off the hook shit! He said, "Change my pitch up, smack my bitch up, like a pimp" (crazy Bert and Ernie type laughter.) Nigguh sick. He's sick, he don't give a fuck.

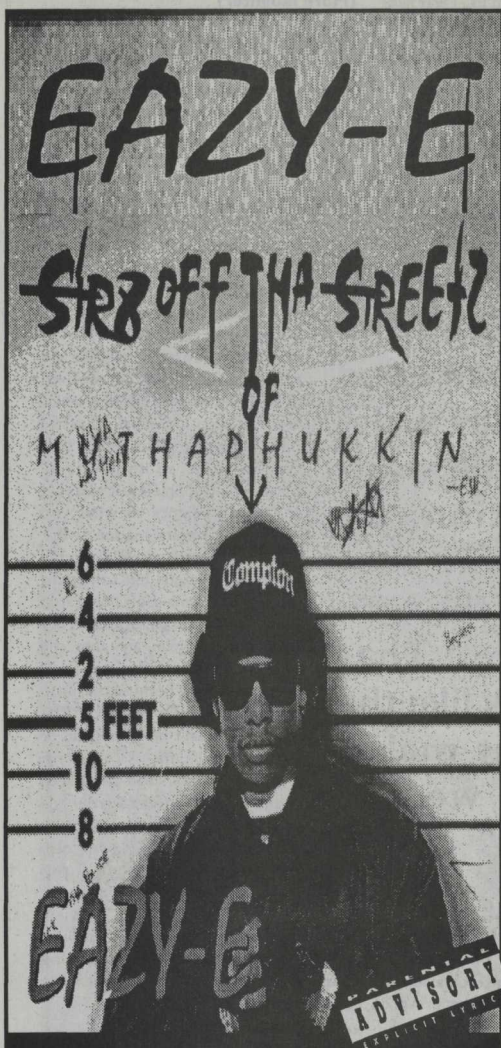
(More laughter)

Oh shit... So, ah - how big a part did Eric "Vietnam" Sadler and the whole Bomb Squad have in the beginning, when Leaders of the New School first arrived?

They was the foundation of our whole inspiration. We looked up to them nigguh like God. Cause those motherfuckers taught us a lot of the shit that we know and what we have applied to grow as a group. Both on a business level as well as on a creative level. They gave us a lot of inspiration and a lot of influence and a lot of lessons b, that got me even to the point where I can now maintain as a solo individual. Cause I still apply those philosophies they instilled in me, so it's all- it's all stirred up now. Shit is just all a part of the ingredients to what you gonna get. Despite we don't work together as much as we did in the beginning, they still left something on me that I'mma apply until I stop fuckin' with music all together. They were geniuses man, and they still are. So I gotta always live along those guide lines because they have always worked for me up to this point. They ain't never mislead or steered me wrong, knowhat' msayin'. So I gotta keep it there but I also gotta grow and add my own jewels and sciences to the shit cause I got a lot of my own genius to offer this yknowhat' msayin'. Word up.

Word. I noticed on the first album ('91) you all had your own publishing back then and that's pretty rare even nowadays.

We had parents that were extremely supportive so they did a lot of researchin' along with us to make sure that whatever we slipped on they was on top of. Word up. My moms was the president of the corporation, Leaders of the New School corporation. Dinco pops was the secretary, Brown moms was the treasurer, knowhat' msayin'? Word up, we had a board of directors duke, when we first came out. A lot of nigguh ain't understand that and if it wasn't for our parents, we wouldn't have understood that shit



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neither. At least not then, knowhati'msayin'.

Yeah and I noticed that from Future Without a Past to T.I.M.E., Leaders always had some sort of moral to the story or most of the shit carried a strong positive message, are you gonna keep coming like that?

No doubt, I always gonna do that. I'mma always do that. Knowhati'msayin', I'mma always present other pictures to life too, even shit that motherfuckers might not be able to get with. Cause there's always a jewel behind the shit that I do cause that's just the role that I took on by nature. I don't even think about that shit sometimes, that shit just happens. That's the way my thought process work cause that's how I've conditioned myself to be. Yaknowhati'msayin', and that's how I've been conditioned by the people I surround myself with so, I play that role cause... I love playin' that role for one. And that's a part of my general make up. Knowhati'msayin', I gotta always plug somebody with a little insight on how I think. Knowmean?

And how did T.I.M.E. do on retail sales?

It ain't do shit. It sold about 80,000 copies.

Word?

Yup. And before the group could really even work it, we wasn't really fuckin' with each other like that no more. Cause we was goin' through a lot of internal bullshit where we needed to space ourselves from each other before we destroyed something we loved so much and worked so hard to create and establish. So instead of 'destroyin' it we just decided to separate, so that we had something to come back to with a better appreciation and with more strength, if we capitalized as individuals. Knowhati'msayin'? That's what we did. And we about to FUCK niggahz up after my solo album duke. Belee dat shit.

On that T.I.M.E. album there was a line in the first song, "Understanding T.I.M.E." that I bugged out on cause it sounded like you was tryin' to say something more than what you said. The line was "Let's do this, let's do that! So I can stop feelin' strange, makin' a fool out of myself actin' deranged. You better believe it's gotta stop! Yes it's gotta stop! Word is bond god, word is bond!"

We need to start doin' shit that's a reflection of who we really are as a people. And stop doin' things and livin' the lifestyle and livin' in a mindframe that isn't naturally ours. Because what I realized about a lot of us people - that aren't European - and aren't naturally a descendant of the western civilization, we usually do shit that conflict with the society structure. That makes us look like the outcasts, that makes us feel like we the strange ones because our nature, isn't a part of the European/western civilization nature of living. We are that of the original peoples nature and we are the makers and the owners and the cream of the planet. I'm the most dominant man in the world. How come I can't be allowed to live by that? The only way I'm allowed to live is by the way the system allows me to live which ain't my system. So I look strange in this system cause this ain't my system. And this shit gotta stop. I gotta create a system for me. Word is bond

god, word is bond! That I could live by, so that I ain't feelin' strange, lookin' fuckin' deranged and stupid in a society that ain't mine. I'm sayin' we need to create a system of our own that we can be proud of and live by comfortably. From birth we are born to live by a European/western civilization way of life and that ain't our way of life, by nature. Do you understand what I'm sayin'? By nature, this is not our birth-right. Okay? So, for us to be livin' by this way man, it's improper. It's other than us, originally. We gotta find ourselves so that we can create a society and a government in a system that we can control and live by comfortably and be original people that we are by nature. That's what I'm sayin'! Let me call you back, I'm about to go eat.

I guess he lost my number.

Artist: Busta Rhymes
Label: Elektra
Album: The Coming
Prod: Various
Crew: Flip Mode Squad
Home: Strong Island, NY

Additional Busta Rhymes...

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1991 "Nitty Gritty (Dog Spelled Backward Rmx)"
w/ KMD & Brand Nubian
KMD - "Nitty Gritty" 12 inch | 1994 "All Adat"
w/ Sadat X
Brand Nubian - Everything Is Everything LP |
| 1991 "Come On Down"
w/ Big Daddy Kane & Q-tip
BDK - Prince of Darkness LP | 1995 "Flava In Your Ear (Rmx)"
w/ Craig Mack, Biggie, Rampage, LL Cool J
Craig Mack - "Flava In Your Ear" 12 inch |
| 1992 "Can't Get Any Harder"
w/ James Brown
James Brown - "Can't Get Any Harder" 12" | 1995 "C'mon Wit the Git Down (Buckwild Rmx)"
w/ Artifacts
Artifacts - "C'mon Wit the Git Down" 12 inch |
| 1992 "A Bunch of Niggas"
w/ Heavy D, GURU, BIG, Third Eye & Grap Lover
Heavy D - Blue Funk LP | 1995 "The Points"
w/ Coolio, Redman, Bone, etc...
Panther Movie Soundtrack |
| 1993 "Wicked Act"
w/ Buju Banton
Buju Banton - Voice Of Jamaica LP | 1995 "Build Ya Skillz"
w/ KRS One
KRS One - KRS One LP |
| 1994 "Oh My God!"
w/ A Tribe Called Quest
ATCQ - Midnight Ravers LP | 1995 "Vibin"
w/ Boyz II Men
Boyz II Men - "Vibin" 12 inch |
| 1994 "One Two Shit"
w/ A Tribe Called Quest
ATCQ - "Oh My God!" 12 inch | 1995 "Freestyle"
w/ FunkMaster Flex & Rampage
FunkMaster Flex - 60 Minutes of Funk LP |

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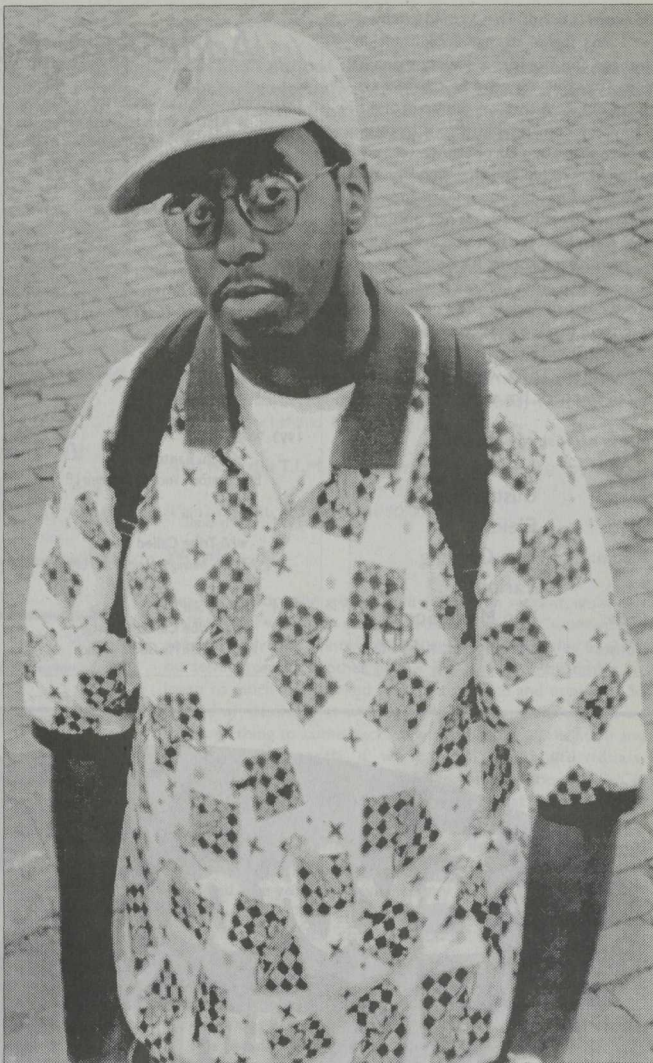
Dealer inquires welcome

If you listen to the mix shows on college and co-op radio or buy mix tapes, then you've probably heard J-Live by now. You know that track with that DJ rockin' a break back and forth while an MC spits some freestyle battle type shit? That song's called "Braggin' Writes" and it's the b-side to J-Live's debut single "Longevity". Growing up in Harlem, Jean-Jacques Cadet came to be known as J-Live not because of his lyrical ability, but because of his skills on the turntables and the way he made his tapes - all live. That would explain the dual role of MC/DJ that J plays on his debut. After releasing his record in late '95 on Raw Shack Productions, "Longevity" has gone on to sell 6 000 copies independently and turn heads in J-Live's direction.

- interview by J Swing -

Why don't you speak about what you were into before the record came out and the process you went through to release it.

Basically I've been rhymin' since junior high school, about 7th or 8th grade. In high school I hooked up with this internship with the man who's actually the producer and CEO of the label, Georges Sulmners. He had preproduction at his rest and told me how to make beats as far as using the S 950. I started rhymin' over his tracks and instead of just shoppin' a demo we figured we'd put out a record and prove it would do a little somethin' out in the market.



J-Live

So you never shopped a demo?

Naw, basically I've just been grassroots local DJ/MC around my way and this just happened to be my first opportunity. These were the first tracks that I ever did and we just pressed it up on wax. It's pretty fortunate considering how long people shop before they get deals. It's a rough business out there and a lot of times people complain it's about who you know.

That's true to an extent, but it's more about what you do for yourself.

Yeah, exactly. I mean I've been going at this with the idea if it works, it works - and if it doesn't, I've got other plans. It just so happens that I like to rhyme, so if you can get paid to do somethin' you love then so be it.

Speak about the record for a minute.

We put "Longevity" out over the summer and put "Braggin' Writes" on the b-side. It's been doin' pretty good. I mean we've sold about 6000. Considering we have no promotional staff or anything like that it's not bad. We're on our fourth pressing right now. We didn't really think it was going to come this far but I'm glad it did. We got 1500 pressed up originally and we were going to try and sell 1100 and see what kind of buzz it made, but stores kept calling saying they need more because it's only on record. You can only imagine what it would do if it was on tape and cd and had a video and a whole staff behind it. But we'll see in the future if I get to do an album.

What's that looking like?

It's looking pretty good. I mean we're talking to some labels. There's definitely some interest. It's been getting a lot of love. It's been all over the radio and a lot of magazines have been giving it play. So people have definitely been supporting it. I mean the name of the record is "Longevity". That's basically what I'm looking for. If this is going to be a full fledged major kinda thing, I'm not going to just put out a record that's just going to sell and not give me any kind of future potential, you know what I mean? I really won't think of myself as having something to look back on until I'm at least four albums down the line. That's just the way I'm trying to look at things right now.

You need to look ahead though.

Yeah, I mean a lot of people just think "I got a single out, I got a video out, everybody's sweatin' me." I don't really see it like that. I'm tryin' to make music, I don't want to just make records. That's why I like workin' with Georges, because as far as making beats is concerned he's not just trying to take one thing and loop it and call it his, y'knowwhat'sayin'. He's actually creative with it. We definitely compliment each others styles. I try to come with original lyrics. I don't like sayin' the same thing that's been said. Like a lot of people will just have a 200 word starter kit and call themselves MC's, y'knowwhat'sayin'?

And the majority of artists coming out these days seem to be getting deals and making noise because they're down with this crew or they're affiliated with that crew. Did you find it more difficult to come out on your own, not riding the success of one of your boys who blew the spot before you?

I mean yeah, I can definitely dig through the crates and everybody that's out right now has somebody backing them up but it just goes to show you that that's basically not what it's all about. I mean you do need to have connections in this industry to get where you want to get, but you don't necessarily have to have someone holding you up when you first step out. People should like your music not for who you know, but for what you're saying. It's definitely something to appreciate though, I have to say peace to everyone that's supporting J-Live.

Is there anything you want to speak about?

Yeah. The whole thing with different fads and changes that Hip Hop's going through. One minute it's all about guns and this and that, the next minute it's all about being abstract just because a few innovators will really blow things up. Next minute it's all about fashion, how many brand names you can fit into 16 bars. It's like now, it seems that people are starting to go towards politics as far as tryin' to read up on what goes on. I'd just like to say that I really hope that's not just a fad. I really hope that people are actually starting to use their minds a little, like the way it used to be. Because if it is a fad it's just going to die down, and we really don't need political awareness to die down.

J-Live

"Longevity"
b/w "Braggin' Writes"

81%

Raw Shack

Word! I like to see artists doin' that independent type shit, y'knowwhat'sayin'! No compromises for the bureaucrats and all that. J-Live, hailing from NYC, emerges from the pack of anonymity with his debut single "Longevity". The track got a catchy chorus with the Black Moon sample "the incredible, lyrical and original" and Sista Nancy's unmistakably distinct voice singing, "MC is my ambition!". It's fly enough for me to catch myself singing that shit so I guess it's a hook. J-Live got lyrical skills no question, flexin' an extensive vocab and some tight flows. All in all "Longevity" bumps, but it ain't the hardest shit I heard. The b-side wins again on this twelve-inch with J-Live not only rhyming, but flawlessly freakin' a break on the 1 & 2's. The cut got me open when I heard it and this kid spits some wild shit - "my potential increases at a rate that's exponential". If you don't know what the means, I'll break it down for you. He got mad untapped skills, so look out for the "Live One" in the future. I'm sure he'll be around for a while, after all he's all about the longevity, right?

- Checkmate



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Ill State Assassins

E.C. Illa L.P.
Wicked Ent.

77%

Word up! Just the other day I was tellin' my homie that it's kinda strange to me that major U.S. cities such as Chicago and Detroit have not taken larger pieces of the Hip Hop pie. Then presto... Swinga hits me up with some new Chi-town shit. **E.C.**, a soloist from the **Ill State Assassins**, has just released his first nationally distributed (U.S.) album entitled **E.C. Illa L.P.** From Ill State's bio, it looks like these cats got mad respect in their hometown, having released shit in Chicago since '92. Who knows? I ain't been to Chicago lately. All that background shit aside, I took time out to peep this album several times, and word is bond, these kids got some ill shit. The track that stands out in my mind is "Devistate", featuring **E.C.**, **Kay Tone of D 2 Tha S**, and **Devine**. The flows are tight, and the production had me open. Later on I discovered that this song is the first single off the album, with "What You Be About?" featured on the b-side. Fair warning to all anti gangsta type fools - the sounds on this album are straight killa G shit, ya might not cope! However, ain't nuthin' gimmicky or fake about **E.C.** and his delivery. I like it when an M.C.'s actually saying somethin'. It's dope to me that Ill State is representin' the bangers. I'm

sayin', that's what the fuck I'd expect from kids saturated in the gang phenomenon that's so much a part of their city. On the production side, all the cuts are raw, the beats are hard, the basslines are murderous and not too many loops are used. Is this the ever evasive sound of Chicago? I don't know, but they show more regional flavor than **Common**. On the down side, the album - which is pretty deep - consists of the same sounds throughout so it could get a little monotonous. Whatever, whatever - I like it so let's not over analyse. We'll be hearing more from Ill State Assassins.

- Checkmate

Fugees The Score Ruffhouse

80%

Since their first LP release, *Blunted On Reality*, the Refugees have since left many past traits which may have turned off a few heads from their music. Luckily two well remixed singles kept their heads above water and their names on peoples lists. It's now '96 and "Ready Or Not" "Cowboys" and cowgirls, it's time for their latest release *The Score*. I'm sure you've heard "Fugee-La" by now but if you haven't don't worry, that's just icing on the proverbial cake. This

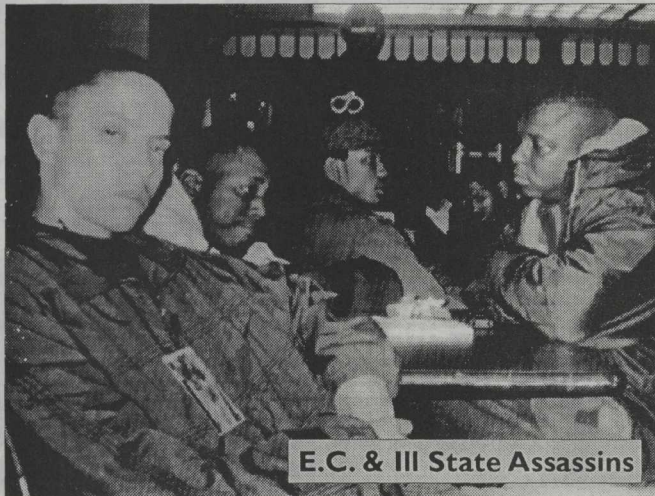
album runs eleven songs deep plus a few intros and outros which feature people like **Kool DJ Red Alert** and **Ras Baraka** with "The Man" himself, **Diamond**, who takes time out to not only produce the title track but to drop a few rhymes on it too. Most of the beats on this album are slow tempo and laidback with the remaining production credits going to **Wycleff & Ms. Lauren Hill**. A few cover tracks were included too, one is **Bob Marley's** "No Woman, No Cry" and the other **Roberta Flack's** "Killing Me Softly". Although these are old tracks, Fugees redo them with a new Hip Hop feel to it. Also, don't be surprised when you hear a plentitude of singin' on a lot of the tracks, this is not your by the book Hip Hop album. The Fugees are definitely breakin' some new ground. Progression is the key word in the game of success and the Fugees have all made a much needed change. Lauren, for me, is still the bomb factor to the group and shines like a muthaf*!#@a on the LP. Wycleff has some good flows and adds a lil' flavor to it, but **Prakazrel** needs to work on them skills a little more. Other than that I would say this is a well put together album and will most definitely create new fans for these Refugees.

- Kemo, the motherf*!#@in' Labrat

2 Pac All Eyes On Me Death Row

88%

Yo! When I got this piece I didn't know where to start. I'm sayin' this kid got 27 cuts on his forth release - a double album entitled *All Eyes On Me*. No shit, all eyes are on 2 Pac. The man just got blasted, went to jail, spent hella time in court facing numerous other charges, and now he's signed to **Death Row**, a superpower among rap labels. I'm sayin', with Tupac, a bonafied celebrity on his own, joining forces with **Death Row** I'd safely estimate album sales to reach the four times platinum plateau. You think I'm trippin'? Maybe, but check out the producer list: **Dr. Dre, Dat Nigga Daz, DJ Quik, DJ Pooh**, and some other niggaz who make some fly shit. West up! Still ain't impressed? Well check out the guest rappers list on this bitch: **Snoop, Daz & Kurrupt, Method Man, Redman, Rappin' 4-Tay, The Click, Dru Down, Nate Dogg, George Clinton**,



E.C. & Ill State Assassins

Roger Troutman and some other motherfuckers. I also heard **Faith Evans** on a cut called "Wonda Why They Call You Bitch" that's not listed in the credits. Still not convinced that Tupac is back? Well all you gotta do is peep the album. It'll probably take some time but let me say this - the production is some tight west coast shit, some rollin' fly shit. Daz is on some pimp shit no question, and there's nuff talent on this album to get anybody trippin' at one point or another. If I had to mention five songs after just a couple of listens I'd have to say "How Do U Want It", "All About U", "Got My Mind Made Up", "When We Ride" and "Rather Be Ya Nigga". But that doesn't do the album justice. About 25 of the songs are dope. Even that "California Love" shit sounds alright without that wack video turning niggaz off. If ya don't like west coast shit (I mean real west coast shit) don't bother peepin' this. If you're all about the west, your gonna love this album. I thought the shit is bomb, and I ain't really been a Tupac fan. Regardless, the shit's out and selling. Let's see if it makes the 4 million mark. 88%

- Checkmate

Mic Geronimo The Natural Blunt

83%

Another product out of Queens, Geronimo first created a buzz with the underground jam "Shit's Real", selling a grip of wax independently and then getting picked up by Blunt Records. He then dropped his second single and blew the spot with "Masta I.C.", leaving everone eagerly anticipating his debut. Now he's back with a full length 13 cuts deep entitled *The Natural*. This album is what I call "elegant Hip Hop", laidback (but not soft) lyrics over smooth production. The LP's brightest moment comes when Geronimo teams up with his Wastelanz fam **O.C.**, **Royal Flush** and their boy **C-Lo** on "Men Vs. Many". Check the production, **Beatminerz** hooked these guys up. This is one of my early picks for cut of the year. He also shows that he can shine solo on "Man Of My Own" and "Lifecheck". Geronimo definitely put his own shit on and *The Natural* takes you through the struggle that Geronimo encountered on his road to recognition. Other cuts to check for include "Things Change" and "Three Stories High". Geronimo's work is definitely paying, this is one of the better albums of '96 so far, you'd be slippin' if ya didn't pick it up.

- Jeeps

Goodie Mob Soul Food LaFace

89%

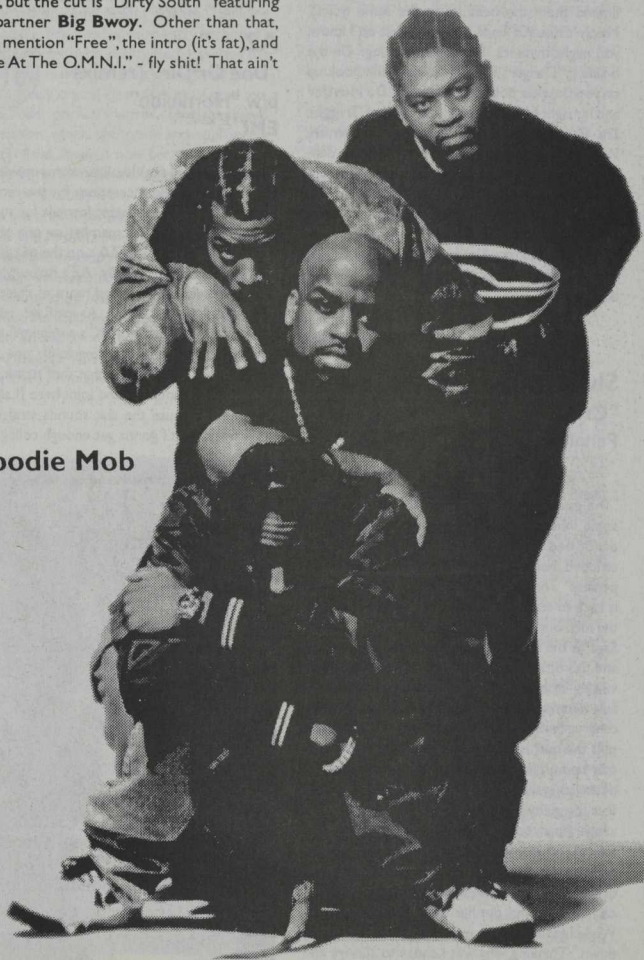
"It would be nice to have mo' but I kinda like being po', at least I know what my friends here fo'..."

Word up! Remember Goodie Mob off **Outkast's** joint "Git Up, Git Out"? Well now these cats out of Atlanta got their own album on LaFace called *Soul Food*. Y'all probably heard the first single "Cell Therapy" - bomb, right? Well yo, this album is on the level, straight up! **Andre** from Outkast is featured on the first cut "Thought Process", but the cut is "Dirty South" featuring his partner **Big Bwoy**. Other than that, I'ma mention "Free", the intro (it's fat), and "Live At The O.M.N.I." - fly shit! That ain't

all the album's good for though. All the production is tight and is handled by **Organize Noise**, but the format of the album reminds me of *Southernplayalistic*, but that's to be expected since they're boys and all that. On the content tip - these cats are sayin' a lotta shit and amazingly it's positive and conscious. These niggaz flow and sing and they are actually sayin' something. I haven't peeped the album enough to say anything more, but I will say that I'm glad I got it 'cause it's definitely worth having. *Soul Food* is a fly and at the same time righteous album. I dig it. Checkmate rate: 89% no doubt.

- Checkmate

Goodie Mob



Blahzay Blahzay "Danger" remix b/w "Danger Pt. II" Fader

79%

I'm sure you've heard the original version by now. You know that song with the catchy chorus "When the east is in the house... Oh my god... DANGER!!!!" Well here is Blahzay Blahzay's next release, the remix joints for "Danger". As for the remix, **DJ Premier** is called in for his handywork, although I'm sure he didn't bust a sweat when he flipped them the beat (over the same lyrics). Mainly 'cause it's kinda butt, but what do I know, you might think it's dope or something. On the b-side is "Danger" Part II featuring "the hook up on your hooker hooker" **Smoothe Da Hustler** and his right hand man and little brother **Trigger Da Gambler** and this other guy **Darkman**. With these four MC's all on one track it's definitely the more dangerous. Trigger's verse impresses me the most, he got skills. The beat was produced and induced by the group themselves, **P.F. Cuttin'** and **Out Loud**. This is just the beginning for Blahzay Blahzay. I'm curious to see and hear their forthcoming LP. It could be the bomb.

- Kemo the Labrat

Shabazz The Disciple "Crime Saga" Penalty

86%

"The game never change only the players, while some inherit castles and thrones some end up death bed layers. Victims of the system are stripped mentally, hit with 25 to life or the death penalty." The God Scientific Shabazz the Disciple is back to scare the shit out of devils and confuse the fuck out of all y'all ig' nant ma' fucks. "Crime Saga" is the conclusion of "Death Be the Penalty" and this time Shabazz chooses to tell a very convincing story about a professional criminal who falls victim to his own destiny. This ain't your typical drug dealing story because the orator Shabazz, tells the tale as though he lived it himself. It just may be non fiction, as he states at the beginning of the song that "the names was changed to protect the guilty." His delivery is sickening and the imagery is strong with scenes like, "His world was spinning fast, the walls of hell were closing in, angel of death was on his ass, his adversaries rose again." or peep this line that had me buggin', "Six men carried his coffin, put him six feet in the ground. While I stood six feet over in a black suit looking down. Thinking, why was I chose to survive and

bear these memories? Fucking with that dirty game, death is always the penalty." The other cut, "Conscious of Sin" is on some more number seven type shit that will most probably be overlooked as some "horror-core" bullshit - fuck it, if you don't know what you're listening to then shut the fuck up and let the Gods speak. Yo, you ain't gotta be God Body (I sure as hell ain't) to listen to this shit, you just gotta listen and learn with an open mind, but if just don't give a fuck then...you don't. PS- shit's ill anyhow, you can't front on the beats for a second, shit's tight.

- Freestyle Craze

AZ "Doe Or Die" (remix) b/w "Homicide" EMI

81%

This time around the Visualizer teams up with the Chef of all marvellous creations for the remix of "Doe Or Die". What better formula for success in '96 than putting a Wu member on one of your tracks, right? Plus the **RZA's** on the mix so you know...you know. Lyrically, AZ's delivery is superior. He definitely needed more of these type of raw tracks on his album. As for Rae? His shit is always on status. Both MC's compliment each other as they rhyme back and forth, one verse each over RZA's "yo that's that shit!" track. AZ's got himself an underground joint here (I say underground because the shit sounds straight off the 4-track) that's gonna get enough college and

mix show play. On the b-side is "Mo Money, Mo Murder (Homicide)", where AZ and his co-defendant **Nas Escobar** team up once again for another ill track. The beat is definitely butter to your ears and the lyrics will enter you into the minds of these two MC's as they take you into their world. It sounds like AZ is embarking on some newness and with guest spots from **Raekwon** and **Nas** he (and you) can't go wrong. The LP version of "Doe Or Die" had no business being on this dope slab of wax though.

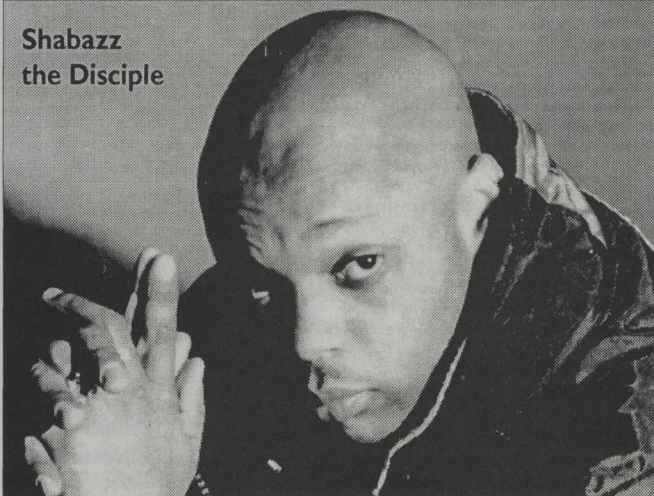
- Logic

Royal Flush "Movin' On Ya Weak Production" Blunt

72%

You probably first heard of Royal Flush on **Mic Geronimo's** shit earlier this year, he was on almost every song, but now he too has just released his own debut single "Movin' On Ya Weak Production" on Blunt Records. If you're expecting to hear another Mic Geronimo your kinda right, although you can also throw in a little **Nas**, **Raekwon** & **AZ** "guns and grams" type lingo. Don't get me wrong, this kid can rhyme and he's sayin' somethin' that brothers can relate to. It's just nothing I haven't heard before (seems to be a common thing). Production was handled by the **Beatminerz** and once again they deliver a solid beat, sticking to that smooth samples over rough beats formula that's worked for them in the past.

Shabazz the Disciple



The biggest problem with this record is that it doesn't sound like it fits together. The lyrics don't sound right over the beat and the chorus doesn't really relate to what homeboy is sayin'. I'm curious to see what he's gonna come up with next 'cause I don't think this is Royal Flush at his best (check Geronimo's album).

- Jeeps

Sunz of Man "No Love Without Hate" Wu-Tang

70%

A branch off the **Wu-Tang** tree, Sunz of Man return with a new single and resume the underground formula that worked well for them in the past. They're rhyming over a slow and laid back beat, talkin' about the balance of life and how you can't have the good without the bad. Straight up, I've heard better tracks from Sunz of Man before. This cut reminds me of a b-side to another track but the a-side is missing. I can't say I dislike this song, but I can't say I like it either. No love without hate, right? All we can do is wait for their album and then we'll have some shit to talk about.

- DJ Kemo

Rascalz "Dreaded Fist" b/w "Fit & Redi" & "Clockwork" Figure IV

80%

"Dreaded Fist" is an instantly recognizable **Kemo** joint with a simple piano loop structure. **Red I**'s

natural charisma, unique voice and clear delivery is the highlight on this one while **Misfit**'s reinforcement gives the last angle to this industry standard. You know the 'I have the power to rip mics, wack MC's, and destroy tracks' this is who I am, this is where we live, so recognize and put us on the map' routine. 75%. The "Fit & Redi (Dubclub mix)" follows this idea again but with excellent MC chemistry and good flows. Once again 75%. I may be lacking in knowledge or appreciation of styles, skills and content of 'what's the definition of a real MC' as exhibited on such industry standards so I may not be gettin' it. I do get "Clockwork" though. This is a flawless fucking diamond. Literally, everything about this track runs like clockwork - the roster (in order) of **Checkmate** from **All About Us**, **Red I**, **Flipout** and **Misfit**, **Kemo**'s sophisticated production and the whole concept it's self. This is some shit that says 'Let's drop some fucking science.' Building from **Kemo**'s "tick-tock" opening into **Checkmate**'s straight up brawl with reality, **Red I** carries the thought into mastery of life's energy and tools. **Flipout**'s steely crystal clear analysis of time mechanics builds on **Red**'s words. Discipline leads to revelation which ultimately and appropriately leads to **Misfit**. Analysis now becomes third-eye journeys from reality to the unknown, from idea to abstract. Basically from **Checkmate** to **Misfit**. **Kemo**'s use of acoustic bass, emotional keyboard horizons and pocket change pianos add the perfect unspoken. Here industry rules, promotions, and bullshit of the day don't grip at up and coming artists trying to get over. "Clockwork's" greatness lies in the listener gaining insight, revelation, emotion and knowledge from each MC that touched the mic. 90% easily. And a grand total of 80% for the 12" on a whole.

- Mr. Bill

Saukrates/Choclair "Father Time" b/w "21 Years" 85 Day Productions

85%

Holding down the fort straight of the fuckin' streets of Toronto, **Saukrates** is representin' Canada. We all heard songs like that '94 track "Still Caught Up" and his second single "Hate Runs Deep", and with "Father Time" **Saukrates** is here to show motherfuckers are still caught. With tight beats from Day Productions, this brother is comin' off with butter lyrics that are razor sharp and to the point. Bustin' out mad styles and lettin' sucker MC's know 'done that, been there, so whatever.' But on another note for all those jeep heads, check out the b-side "21 Years" by **Choclair**. The track is slammin' no doubt. Another **Saukrates** piece of vinyl to look for is "California". Being true to his position, **Saukrates** is giving it up for the ladies using D'Angelo's "Lady" instrumental. It'd definitely a sure shot. The flip side of that record is his boy **Marvel** with "Words Of", a jazzy track that's definitely on some next shit. From the words of **Rakim** "It ain't where your from, it's where your at."

- Sean Ski

Kool Keith "Wanna Be A Star" b/w "Slide We Fly" Funky Ass

91%

Another stroke of genius. Within one track, **Keith**'s able to pay tribute to a beautiful girl and manipulate our collective "whipped" reaction or appetite for this shit. Through his usual mad hatter descriptions and random thoughts, **Keith** describes every girl and situation we've all thought about, seen, made jokes about with the fellas and shook our heads at. This is a twisted player track but **Keith**'s so smart and subtle that he plays both the "stable of hoes" and his audience. Anybody who listens to that chorus and does not think it's a joke has been played as any hoe described in **Keith**'s song. I mean, the chorus is so wack in it's delivery and content that it's brilliant. **Keith**'s brilliance lies in content, description and delivery through every imaginably angle of the big picture. The b-side: Only on a **Kool Keith** track can you get a chorus paying tribute to sexual prowess, b-boy style, b-boy stances, double meaning, fear of no man and refusal to sell out or worry about success all this time with a new slang phrase, "slide we fly." As you get a few bars into the track and start to get comfortable - **BAM! Out of nowhere!** This fucked up chorus flattens you blindsided and chaos spills out you fractured skull. Another twisted personality grows out of **Keith** as he heads down the yellowbrick road with



Red I of Rascalz

Noggin' Nodders. On the road to Oz these two pepper the track with unorthodox phrasing, delivery and pace. Eerie space/haunted music, split personality, horns, pianos and bass blur your vision and blind the reality you think you know. Overall, these two tracks are excellent samples of a lyrical master and an excellent addition or reference point for any head's library.

- Mr. Bill

Fat Joe
"Envy" b/w "FireWater"
Relativity

73%

"Envy" is a lovely little rape of **Marvin Gaye's** "Sexual Healing" joint, strictly for the clubs if ya catch my drift. There is of course, a sensuous female vocal accompaniment on the chorus while Fat Joe shoots his gift about 'how his Dad beat him and he didn't know why'. Although the lyrics for the chorus are hella cheezy it just seems to fall right in line with the whole scheme of the song. Fat Joe has definitely made some progression in this "rap game" and with joints like this it's nooooo doubt Joe's going for the C.R.E.A.M. The b-side is some shit though, it's called "FireWater" featuring **The Chef Raekwon** and two other (not known as yet) MC's. This track carries a distinct Wu/ShaoLin flavor with production by **BornLords** and it's bound to leave a doo-doo stain on your brain. I even dig Joe's flow on this track, over all the single's 50/50 one side is bangin' and the other is not so bangin'.

- Kemo (therapy)

R.T.A.
"Indecision"
b/w "Ya Need to Quit"
First Imperial

69%

"Indecision" is an incomparably solid track, hittin' you with verbs, curves and metaphors. **Birdapres'** got some new shit that he's about to drop on the heads. There's also some really nice turntable work courtesy of **RKV**. This piece ain't no club record but it's one of them joints that you'll hear on mixtapes or on radio shows. R.T.A. is definitely on some different type shit. The B-side is the track that everyone got to speak their mind on including, **Bird, Reckless, Taijiquan, Moka** and **Livin' Precision** as they rip the gritty track into five individual pieces. Each rhymers is unique but I really like **Reckless** and **Taijiquan's** vocals. Big ups to **Che** for finally gettin' his product out and on vinyl 12 inch.

- DJ Kilocee

Busta Rhymes w/ O.D.B.
"Woo Hah!!!" (remixes)
Elektra

74%

Holy shit! Who ever the fuck decided to put these two psychopaths together on a remix for "Woo-Hah!!!" must have been "on some outerspace like you watch *Star Trek*" shit. This song lyrically and mentally is off the hook. Don't get me wrong, it starts off pretty hype but by the time it gets to the first chorus, no bullshittin', I don't know what the fuck they're talkin' about. Between the grunts and hooting and hollering I can catch a word or two but then the bassline flips and shit sounds like it's going backwards. I don't know man, it sounds like ODB ain't too concerned about kickin' rhymes normal human beings can understand anymore, he just don't give a fuck. For real. But hey, if you can't get with that version there's only three other one's to choose from (minus ODB). There are two separate **Jay-Dee** remixes and a **DJ Skratch** mix that you should be able to deal with. That other shit is craazy though... I don't know man... I don't know...

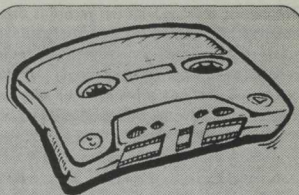
- FreeStyle Craze

Chill Rob G
"Know Ya Place" b/w
"Let Me Know Something"
First Imperial

96%

Seeing this record was a total shock to me because I haven't seen any promo or heard anything about it from anyone before this. All of a sudden, the motherfuckin' man hits you in the head with his latest product. I haven't heard too much from **Chill Rob G** in a while but it's quite apparent that he's back in a big fuckin' way... The production on the a-side reminds me of **Noyd's** shit. Real clean, real sharp and on point. It's produced by **Storm**. The b-side is a bit slower and more of a head nodding track but most def in contention with the a-side. This is the track that I'm gonna play the shit out of. Perfect kicks, perfect snares mixed exceptionally well. This is a two copy must have for any DJ with creativity.

- DJ Kilocee



The Fugees w/ Diamond

The Score
Busta Rhymes

Everything Remains Raw
25 to Life

L.A., L.A.

E.C. & III State Assassins
Devistate

Tha Alkaholiks w/ Snagglepuss & Xhibit

No Hand Outs

Kool Keith

Slide We Fly

Mio Geronimo

Lifecheck

Dark Sun Riders feat. Brother J

Dark Sun Riders

Wu-Tang Clan

Winter Warz

Large Professor

Mad Scientist

Goodie Mob

Dirty South

AZ w/ Chef Raekwon

Doe Or Die (RZA remix)

Royal Fam

Declare War

Special Ed

Freaky Flow (Premier remix)

Lord Finesse w/ Sadat X, Grand Puba

& Large Professor

Actual Fact

Quu, M.O.P. & Stikken Moov

Life

Marvel

Words Of

Fat Joe w/ Chef Raekwon & Showbiz

Fire Water

Mr. Complex

I'm Rhymin'

Ghostface Killer

Motherless Child

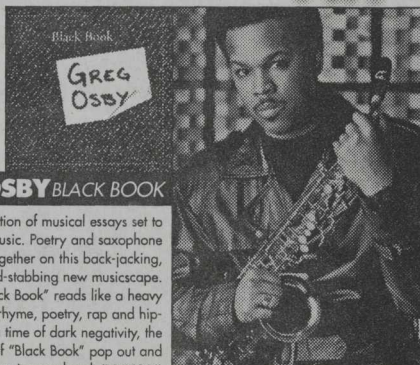


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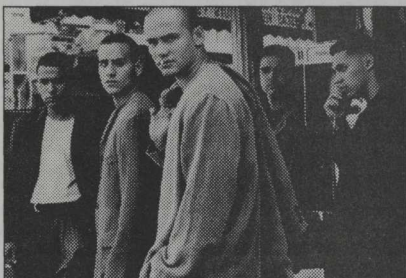
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